

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to highlight how radio is socializing urban Kenyan youth on sexuality. The study sought to answer the following questions: Whether radio is a dominant medium for the socialization of youth on sexuality, the nature of the content that Kenyan urban youth in Nairobi consume on air, the themes on sexuality that the youth are able to express and talk about concerning sexuality, with other agents of socialization viz-a-viz radio, and finally, whether radio is reinforcing the urban youth's beliefs and attitudes, by aptly addressing their concerns and needs on sexuality. The study was guided by the theories of anomie, persuasion and the health belief model. This study was also fashioned along a descriptive design, and entailed the sampling of 115 urban youth from the city of Nairobi. The study enlisted convenience sampling, cluster sampling and purposive sampling. Data was collected from the youth using face-to-face interviews, while key informants who participated in the study used questionnaires. The key informants were purposively sampled from popular radio stations, and the religious leaders were also purposively sampled from the major religious faiths represented in the city. The majority of youth respondents in this study were over 18 years of age, and the spread of the gender distribution in the study noted a slightly higher representation of males than females. The study found that a majority of the youth who participated in the study selected radio as their most frequently used form of media. The study also showed that the youth spend a significant amount of time tuned in to radio. The nature of the content that airs on radio was of special concern for the study and the findings from the study showed that music, and content with specific themes on relationships and sex, were of significance to the youth. It was also established that the youth thought that they could do with more time on air dedicated to the discussion of specific content on sexuality. There was consensus amongst the youth that radio stations should have set times for the discussion of such content, and air advisories before the broadcast of the same. The study concludes that radio is a key and dominant tool in the socialization on sexuality of urban youth. That youth easily discuss very personal, intimate matters, on air. Recommendations include, there be designated times when the youth are able to tune in for content on relationships and sex, the broadcasting of advisories before the airing of such content, and further suggestion for more research.